



UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ SERVING THE CITIZENS OF IDAHO

LARRY CRAIG

[HTTP://CRAIG.SENATE.GOV/PRESS/](http://craig.senate.gov/press/)

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
September 29, 2006

Dan Whiting (202) 224-8078
Sid Smith (208) 342-7985

SENATE VOTES TO CONSERVE FOOTHILLS, CONSOLIDATE IDAHO LANDS

Craig says, "This just plain makes sense."

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States Senate unanimously approved a bill to consolidate public land holdings in Idaho and to help conserve the Boise Foothills. S. 1131, the Idaho Land Exchange Act, was introduced by Idaho Senator Larry Craig.

In May of 2001, the residents of Boise decided to tax themselves to fund efforts to secure open space in the Boise Foothills. This legislation allows the City of Boise to work with the State of Idaho and federal agencies to secure open space in the Foothills and consolidate public land holdings in North Idaho. For instance, the State of Idaho owns land in the Foothills, but preservation of open space in the Foothills is not consistent with the State's constitutional mandate to maximize revenue for schools. So, the State will exchange holdings in the Foothills for more appropriate land in North Idaho.

The legislation was developed in 2003, and numerous public meetings have been held throughout the State to review it and obtain local input.

Craig commended the common-sense approach of the legislation, "This just plain makes sense. We conserve the unique value of the Foothills and consolidate holdings around the State – enabling land managers to be more efficient. It represents a collaborative effort at conservation that will be enacted by Congress."

Idaho State Controller Keith Johnson testified in favor of the legislation for the State of Idaho. During his testimony he stated, "The exchange encourages both common sense and improved economics. In addition, the people of Idaho, particularly those living in the Boise Valley, will get more open space, a precious commodity in one of this nation's growing communities."

Congressman C.L. "Butch" Otter sponsored the companion legislation in the House, H.R. 2718. The House Resources Committee held a hearing on the bill on July 27, 2006.

For more information, including copies of testimony on the bill by Craig and Idaho State Controller Keith Johnson, please visit Craig's website, <http://craig.senate.gov>.